



Librarian-Led Patient Education Resource Centers (PERCs)

Internet and Print Resources

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**On behalf of the
CONSUMER HEALTH LIBRARY PANEL**

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Librarians and Patient Education Resource Centers (PERCs)

Librarians and Patient Educators alike feel that the ideal Patient Education Resource Center would be a large area in an easily accessible location in the hospital. It would have large and small classrooms, teaching tools such as anatomical models and audiovisuals, multimedia equipment, and a consumer health library. Librarians and Patient Educators would work collaboratively within this space; the clinical educators would teach patients specific skills, such as how to inject themselves or care for an injury, while the librarians would provide accurate, current, evidence-based consumer health information in a variety of formats to reinforce the hands-on teaching of the educators.

A variety of PERCs can be found throughout the VA Medical Centers and are known by different names: PERCs, Health Information Centers, Patients' Libraries, and others. They may be contained within the Medical Library. Most only supply one facet of the ideal described above, and the mission of the individual PERC determines the type of staffing.

Professional Librarians are a key element to the success of the type of PERC whose primary mission is providing quality consumer health information in the form of online, print and audiovisual resources to patients. Their graduate degrees and continuing education in Information Sciences have prepared them to quickly and competently conduct reference interviews with both patients and clinicians, assess literacy levels of patients in order to provide the most appropriate learning modalities and materials, and respond quickly in a patient-centered approach to the requestor. This resource listing is intended to assist librarians wishing to begin a new PERC program or improve existing services and resources.

Web Resources:

Consumer and Patient Health Information Services (CAPHIS)

[Managing a Consumer Health Information Service \(CHIS\)](#)

This section of the Medical Library contains information on CHI services, including a policy statement "[The Librarian's Role In The Provision Of Consumer Health Information And Patient Education](#)", services, resource listings, and more.

[The Challenge of Providing Consumer Health Information Services in Public Libraries](#)

The American Association for the Advancement of Science presents data found from the Healthy People 2010 Library Initiative funded by the National Institutes of Health (Grant # 5R25RR15601). Seven key finds are presented, including the value of librarians as health care providers. While geared to public libraries, this 28-page

document contains good information and in fact the VA library in Alexandria LA is featured as an example.

[Standards for Hospital Libraries](#)

These standards from the Medical Library Association include solid recommendations on services and staff for hospital libraries (c2007). Consumer health information services are included. These are the most current standards.

[VHA Handbook 1932.01 Library Service Procedures](#)

The handbook defines the scope of Library practice within VHA, including a strong recommendation: "The Library is strongly encouraged to establish and maintain a patient education resource center (PERC) to fulfill the VHA and the local medical facility's mission."

[Finding Health and Wellness @ the Library: A consumer health toolkit for library staff, 2nd ed.](#)

93 page toolkit available here.

Books:

The Patient Safety Perspective: Health Information and Resources Online and in Print. Holly Ann Burt. ISBN: 978-0-912176871. c2013

ALA guide to medical and health sciences reference. 9780838910238, c2011.

Assessing information needs in the age of the digital consumer. David Nicholas, Eti Herman. ISBN: 9781857434873. c2010.

Putting Patients First: Best Practices in Patient-Centered Care, 2nd ed. Frampton, Susan B. ISBN: 9780470377024. c2009 Chapter 2: Access to Information Informing and Empowering Diverse Populations, Candace Ford Gray & Michele A. Spatz, pg. 27

Answering Consumer Health Questions: The Medical Library Association Guide for Reference Librarians. Michele Spatz. ISBN: 978-155570-632-6. c2008.

Answers to the Health Questions People Ask in Libraries: A Medical Library Association Guide. Laura Townsend Kane, Rozalynd P. McConaughy, Steven Patrick Wilson, and David L. Townsend. ISBN: 978-155570-642-5, c2008.

The Medical Library Association Consumer Health Reference Service Handbook. Donald A. Barclay and Deborah D. Halsted. 2001 (200 pp., softcover + CD-ROM). ISBN 1-55570-418-2

McCall, K, comp. Marketing the consumer health information service. [DocKit#12]. **Kay McCall, AHIP. 1999 (212pp) ISBN 912176-66-0. Softcover, perfect-bound Chicago,IL: Medical Library Association, 1999.**

Creating and Enhancing Patient and Family Resource Centers

(Video also available.). Item No. 32086, Price: \$ 50 The Institute for Family-Centered Care, 7900 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 405, Bethesda, Maryland 20814. *By Phone* 301-652-0281. <http://www.familycenteredcare.org/resources/pinwheel/index.html>

Search the index for this practical guide for developing patient and family resource centers addresses a range of issues, including planning, scope of services, selecting and organizing materials, staffing, use of technology, and evaluation. It includes sample documents, marketing tools, budgets, fundraising strategies, policies and procedures, and a comprehensive listing of consumer health Internet sites. The importance of collaboration with patients, families and communities emphasized.

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Whitney, W; et.al. *Evaluation of health information outreach: theory, practice, and future direction.* **Journal of the Medical Library Association, 2013: 101(2):138-46.**

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